

iGEM from A to Z

*Besides the official definition of what is iGEM, there are words that are strenghtly linked to the competition and its spirit.
We have recruited a personal A to Z dictionary for you all.*

- A) Advisor.** An iGEM team is formed by the students, but also by the advisors and the superadvisors. The role of these ones is to help going on the project, giving advice and discussing about its feasibility.
- B) BioBrick.** A BioBrick is an iGEM related concept referring to the standard for interchangeable parts of a sequence.
- C) Community.** Besides the projects, iGEM represents a group of people sharing the interest in Synthetic Biology. The community also includes DIY Bio labs, hackerspaces or public institutions, and there is a special track for them in the competition.
- D) Database.** The Registry of Standard Biological Parts is the database where characterized BioBricks are saved and available for future uses.
- E) Education.** One of basic purposes of iGEM is to spread Synthetic Biology knowledge and educate both young scientist and general public.
- F) Facets.** iGEM encourages participats to learn new skills belonging to a variety of facets. Entrepreneurship, safe research practices, project design and scientific responsibility are some of them.
- G) Get and Give.** It is the philosophy behing the Registry of Parts, as a continuously growing collection because of team contributions.
- H) Human Practices.** Each team is expected to include a Human Practices section, regarding the ethics behind the idea or situating their projects on a social context.
- I) Interdisciplinarity.** Students from different fields converge in the team. Interdisciplinarity between biologists, computer scientists, philosophers or designers is key for guarantee a good performance.
- J) Jamboree.** The Giant Jamboree is the final competition celebrated in Boston (Massachusets, USA), where teams present their projects and are awarded for their work.
- K) Kit.** Each team is given a DNA Distribution Kit when inscribed. With this, the participants have a common material to start working with.
- L) Laboratories.** iGEM contains a Labs Program for academic research laboratories, with opportunities and benefits for subscribers.
- M) Medals.** In the Giant Jamboree teams receive medals for their work. There are three categories – gold, silver, bronze – and there are different mentions for them.
- N) (inter) Nationalities.** iGEM holds teams from all over the world, being, as the name indicates, an international competition.
- O) Open source.** The research generated in iGEM becomes open source for the scientific community when the competition ends.
- P) Partnership.** Teams collaborate between them organizing events or helping each other, working in partnership.
- Q) Quality.** iGEM is a competition of science excellence. The quality of the projects is high, and participation is well recognized in the CV of the students.
- R) Responsibility.** Students gain autonomy during the development of the project, and they have to be responsible and keep safety and security.
- S) Sponsors.** Financial support is needed to hold on an iGEM project. Teams have to find sponsors helping them economically or providing material.
- T) Tracks.** The competition has several tracks, or categories, in which the teams can receive special prizes. Some of them are Environment, Health and Medicine or New Application.
- U) Undergraduated and graduated students.** iGEM teams are classified into these two categories, depending on their level of studies and experience.
- V) Values.** Related with the facets, iGEM promotes strong values, as integrity, good sportmanship, respect or honesty.
- W) Wiki.** Each team has to present its project on a wiki webpage before the Jamboree, so the work is represented there and kept for posterity.
- X) Xenopus, bacteria or yeast, as examples of chassis.** The project can be implemented on different chassis, or "the conceptual extension of a living cell". It is not limited to the common *Escherichia coli*.
- Y) Year.** The competition is celebrated every year, and when an iGEM cycle finishes, a new one starts.
- Z) Zombie,** as the state in which participants finish the days before the Jamboree, after hours of work.